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Security Information

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9 October 1951

[REDACTED]
SUBJECT: Overuse of Cryptonyms

1. It is observed that the readability of cables and dispatches is being hampered in many cases by the unnecessary and pointless use of cryptonyms.

2. The limitation of the use of cryptonyms, pseudonyms, and identity designators in cables to the specific cases set forth in Paragraph 1 of [REDACTED] was not intended to mean that cryptonyms must be used in all those cases. On the contrary, the use of cryptonyms for other than agent or project references is neither necessary nor desirable in cable traffic where ordinary cryptographic security is sufficient to protect the security of the information.

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3. Cryptonyms should be used in cable traffic only when the correct name of the subject should be concealed from the subject himself should the message fall into his hands; for example, if the message reads "The Department of Understatement has failed miserably" or "Jonathan Jawbraker is suspected of mendacity." No cryptonym should be used if the message reads "The Department of Understatement did a magnificent job" or "Jonathan Jawbraker is veracity personified."

4. In dispatch traffic as well, cryptonyms should be used only when necessary as, for example, when the organization or person referred to is more sensitive than the remainder of the dispatch and when the use of the cryptonym will successfully disguise the meaning and the subject. It should be remembered that nothing is gained by the mere use of a cryptonym when the correct name of the subject can be easily deduced from a reading of the context.

FOR THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR SPECIAL OPERATIONS:

[REDACTED]
Chief, Administration

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Chief, ADMIN.

15 May 1952

Chief, RI

Need for CIA Regulation Concerning
Cryptic References

1. Due to the current increasing demands for names to be used as aliases and pseudonyms throughout the Agency there is an urgent need for control.

2. It is suggested that the Management Staff be asked to conduct a survey that would result in a CIA Regulation setting Agency Policy regarding the security, procurement, authority, and centralized issuance of aliases and pseudonyms.

Such a regulation could be to this problem as CIA Regulation

3. This problem has been brought to a focus by the publication of OPC Bulletin [REDACTED] dated 12 May 1952 (copy attached), which was not coordinated with RI/OSO.

Enclosure- 1

OPC Bulletin [REDACTED]

12 May 1952

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